

# **Orleans Parish School Board Urged To Maintain McDonogh 35 Senior High School As A Direct Run School**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact: Gertrude A. Ivory**

**[mcdonogh35alumniassociation@yahoo.com](mailto:mcdonogh35alumniassociation@yahoo.com)**

**504-723-3541**

NEW ORLEANS, LA – The McDonogh 35 Senior High School Alumni Association Board of Directors strongly urges the Orleans Parish School Board and Superintendent Henderson Lewis to maintain McDonogh 35 Senior High School as a district direct-run school. In addition, the Alumni Association Board further demands stability in school leadership and faculty as well as the necessary supports and financial resources in order to insure student success.

“McDonogh 35 is one of the city’s most historic institutions with a solid track record of producing successful alumni for over a century”, said Gertrude Ivory, President of the McDonogh 35 Alumni Association Board of Directors. Ivory further stated, “We have an opportunity to restore McDonogh 35 to the national prominence it deserves. The McDonogh 35 Alumni Association Board of Directors looks forward to a continued partnership with the Orleans Parish School Board in this important effort.”

Since its inception, the McDonogh 35 Alumni Association has worked to advance the legacy of McDonogh 35 Senior High School as an institution of academic excellence and cultural pride by fostering alumni involvement through advocacy and volunteerism, offering financial support and lifelong commitment to the student body and to the school, and promoting lasting relationships among its graduates. The Board of Directors of the McDonogh 35 Alumni Association feels the students, faculty, staff, parents and alumni will be best served as an Orleans Parish School Board direct-run school, and strongly urges the Orleans Parish School Board and Superintendent Henderson Lewis to maintain the institution’s current governance model – direct oversight and management by the local, constitutionally-mandated, and democratically-elected school board.

McDonogh 35 was founded in 1917 as the first African American high school in Orleans Parish. It has continuously operated for 101 years and has been recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the United States Department of Education. McDonogh 35 has produced many prominent alumni including: Dr. Mack J. Spears; Mayor Ernest “Dutch” Morial; Judge Israel Augustine; Judge Joan Bernard Armstrong; Reverend A.L. Davis; and two time NFL Superbowl Champion Neil Smith along with a host of others serving in leadership roles at the local, state, and national levels.

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